REMARKS

The Examiner objected to the drawings as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the reference signs for 137 and 121. A proposed drawing showing the reference signs for 137 and 121 in red is enclosed herein for the Examiner's review and approval.

In view of the Examiner's reminder of the proper language and format for an abstract, the abstract is amended accordingly.

In view of the Examiner's advisement that should claims 1-16 be found allowable, claims 17-32 will be objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate thereof, claim 17 is canceled and claims 18-32 are amended to depend, directly and indirectly, from new claim 36.

Reconsideration is requested of the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Arrowood U.S. Patent No. 3,933,377.

The Arrowood reference teaches a complicated hanger assembly for pipes 9 that includes multiple distinctive parts (e.g. gasket 10, shield 16, straps 17 and 18) for connecting two pipes 14 and 15. Additional multiple distinctive parts (e.g. stabilizer 30, body of an eyelet 54, bolt 57, nut 58 and hanger rod 53) are necessary to allow the assembly to be attached to a supporting structure.

A claim is anticipated under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) only if "each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." Verdegaal Bros. V. Union Oil Co. of California, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 U.S.P.Q.2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987) (emphasis added). Amended claim 1 discloses a coupling device for positioning a pair of electrical wire-carrying conduits to be supported by a supporting member

capable of being secured to a structure above said coupling device, said supporting member including a stem having a free end portion, said coupling device comprising:

(a) an integral tubular member having opposed axially aligned ends,

(b) each of said ends adapted to receive one end of one of the pair of mating conduits,

(c) and said tubular member having an integral top surface and

(d) an aperture through said top surface adapted to be engaged by the free end portion of said stem of said supporting member.

The Arrowood reference fails to disclose, at least, the following elements of amended claim 1: "***an integral tubular member***" (element a), "said tubular member having ***an integral top surface***" (element c), and "***an aperture through said top surface adapted to be engaged by the free end portion*** of said stem" (element d). Although the purpose of the Arrowood device is similar to that of the present invention, the structures of the two are completely different.

The Arrowood reference fails to disclose, teach or suggest an integral coupling device with minimal parts or an aperture through the top surface of the tubular member wherein stem 31 is engaged. As discussed above, the Arrowood reference utilizes multiple parts to couple two pipes and to hang the assembly to a supporting structure. Furthermore, the aperture of the Arrowood reference is not through the wall of the tubular member, but is a separate part extending perpendicular to the top surface. Similarly, the hanger rod 53 of the Arrowood reference does not engage said aperture such that the free end of the stem is positioned within the confine of the tubular member in contact with the conduits, but is attached to another part, the body of an eyelet 54, which is then attached to another part, a stabilizer 30. The present invention advantageously overcomes the drawback of the Arrowood reference requiring multiple parts that need to be assembled. Therefore, the Arrowood reference intentionally fails to teach

"each and every element" of amended claim 1 and all claims dependent therefrom, including claims 2-16, as required under a §102(b) rejection. Hence, claims 1-17 are not anticipated by the Arrowood reference.

New claims 33-39 are added to further clarify the scope of the invention.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the abstract and the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is entitled "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made."

By virtue of the Applicant's amendment to the abstract and claims and remarks thereto, all outstanding grounds of rejection and objection have been addressed and dealt with and, based thereon, it is believed that the application is now in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Abstract:

Please amend the abstract on page11 of the specification as follows:

A coupling device [is provided] for electrical wire-carrying conduits for assembly with an overhead support member having a stem with a free threaded end. The coupling device [comprises] includes a tubular member having axially opposed ends, each of which receives an end of a mating conduit, and [a] the top surface on the [conduit] tubular member has an aperture for engagement with the free end of the stem of the supporting member.

In the Claims:

Amend claims 1, 18, 19, 21 and 25 as follow:

1. (Amended) A coupling device for positioning a pair of electrical wire-carrying conduits to be supported by a supporting member capable of being secured to a structure above said coupling device, said supporting member comprising a stem having a free end portion, said coupling device comprising an integral tubular member having opposed axially aligned ends, each of said ends adapted to receive [a] one end of one of the pair of mating conduits, and said tubular member having an integral top surface and an aperture [in] through said top surface adapted to be engaged by the free end portion of said stem of said supporting member.

18. (Amended) A coupling device as in claim [17] 36 wherein said top surface is raised relative to the exterior surface of said tubular member.

19. (Amended) A coupling device as in claim [17] 36 wherein said aperture is threaded internally and said stem of said supporting member is externally matingly threaded at least at its free end for engaging into said internally threaded aperture.

21. (Amended) A coupling device as in claim [17] 36 further including a lock nut along said stem for locking the free end of said stem into said aperture.

25. (Amended) A coupling device as in claim [17] 36 wherein said stop member projects internally at about the middle of said tubular member.